MESSAGE

FROM THE

GOVERNOR of DELAWARE

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

DELIVERED, JANUARY 6, 1857.

1857:
DELAWARE STATE REPORTER BOOK AND JOB PRINTING OFFICE,
DOVER, DELAWARE.

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MESSAGE.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate
and of the House of Representatives:

The time has arrived when, by established custom and the provisions of the Constitution, it becomes the duty of the Executive to address you upon whatever he may deem calculated to advance the interests or promote the general welfare of the State. The interval that has transpired since the last session of the General Assembly, has been to our whole country a period of almost universal progress and prosperity; and our grateful acknowledgments should be freely offered to the Beneficent Ruler of the Universe for the many and signal blessings He has bestowed upon us. It is true that for a season the chastening hand of pestilence has heavily laid upon the people of some portions of our confederacy; but even this afflicting providence was kindly tempered with mercy, and was the occasion of our exhibiting to the world the beautiful example of a great people, who, though widely separated in territory, are yet closely bound to each other by the ties of sympathy for their mutual sufferings and sorrows. If in time of danger from invasion by a foreign foe, the rapid march of an army of citizen soldiers from one sister State to another far distant, betokens the existence of pure patriotism among us, the swift flight of messengers of healing and mercy from far-off sections of our country, to those scenes where the pestilence walketh in darkness and destruction wasteth by noonday, most surely evinces a virtue no less sacred and ennobling to our nature—a virtue which, so long as it exists in our national character, must prove an invincible barrier against the rude assaults of those who may strive with the spirit of demons to divide and then destroy our blessed Union. While foreign war and domestic convulsions have disturbed the tranquility and threatened the very existence of other governments, we have made steady and rapid growth in all that tends to confer dignity, respect and power upon a people.

In this general prosperity of our country, it is especially gratifying to observe the many evidences of progress in our own State. On every hand, our citizens are wakening to the many advantages we possess in our proximity to the great commercial marts, as well as the natural vigor of our soil and its capacity for the highest fertilization. The introduction of concentrated manures, until recently unknown among us, has,

with other causes, which I shall more particularly refer to, opened u new era in the history of agriculture, and has been the means of resu tating lands whose generous yield has hitherto been taxed beyond th power of profitable production. Waste and neglected fields are n re-invigorated by the use of these new fertilizers, and made to yi abundant crops. Through their agency, the basis is laid for permane improvement. Our advantages are beginning to be appreciated not o by our own people, but citizens from neighboring States are directi their attention hitherward, and are attracted by the cheapness of c lands and the many other inducements offered by a settlement in c midst. Let us, in the spirit of our Federal Constitution, extend to th the hand of good fellowship, and welcome them to a participation in the blessings we ourselves enjoy. Our location and soil peculiarly ada the section which we occupy to the purposes of agriculture; and as th is the important interest of the whole country, more especially that our own State, no effort should be omitted, on our part, to foster a encourage this element of political wealth. It becomes us to afford eve facility of transportation and inter-communication that may be absolute necessary for the full development and success of agricultural enterpri

While the habits and customs of our people and their comparati seclusion have hitherto turned their attention and capital almost entire to agricultural employments, yet the improvement of our lands, and th farming interests generally, are not the only pursuits to whic our State is adapted. Most certainly a highly cultivated soil, and th resuscitation of worn-out lands, are among the surest indications of th prosperity and progress of a community; but in my judgment, we hav greatly erred, in supposing that these were the only agencies by which th wealth of our State could be increased, and her position elevated amon her sister States. There is no good reason why we may not become manufacturing and commercial, as well as an agricultural community. A the means best calculated to accomplish an end so desirable, I earnestl recommend a judicious, and well regulated system of internal improv ments. Some of our sister States, with natural advantages, not to b compared with our own, have far out-stripped us in all that is essentia to the prosperity and greatness of a commonwealth. In spite of a rug ged and sterile soil, and of a cold inhospitable climate—obstacles, whic to those more favored, would seem almost insurmountable—the have achieved for themselves an enviable reputation, for industry, enter prise and skill. Their success may well be attributed to their enlight ened views of public policy, and their just appreciation of the advanta ges flowing from an easy communication between remote sections o country. It is thus they have been able to develop fully their natura resources and to impart new life and vigor, to the manufacturing and mechanical arts. Whilst railroads and canals have been opened in othe States, through impediments apparently invincible, the State of Delaware, with a territory presenting an almost unbroken surface, with a soil capa- ble of the highest culture, and with a large surplus in her treasury, has

as yet scarcely manifested an appreciation of her position and ability for such works of public utility and necessity.

I have already spoken of the evidences of improvement in our State, with particular reference to its agricultural interests. By the large use of guano, lime and other fertilizers ; and more especially by the opening of communication between the interior of the State and the cities, value has been imparted to many products hitherto unsaleable, and means afforded of improving the soil, and rendering it more productive. From the same causes, our population is rapidly augmenting, new modes of agriculture and farm-management are growing into use, and erroneous prejudices so long entertained respecting the climate and soil of our State, are constantly yielding to practical observation and experience, the only arguments by which they can be successfully eliminated. But above all I regard the change so obviously taking place in the habits of our people from a state of inaction and want of energy, to that of industry, management and thrift, as a subject of great felicitation. I attribute this gratifying result, almost entirely to the opening of communication by steamboats, whose influence, in this respect, is more apparent in parts adjacent to their landings, and to the railroad, which extends the same influence more largely into the country. I ascribe the recent unprecedented advancement of the State in population, in the value of assessable property, and in the change of habits in the people, in a great degree, to the improvement policy adopted by two previous Legislatures ; and I am led to believe that the influence which that policy has already exerted upon the habits of the people in the lower counties, if strenghtened by further legislation, will place them in a position to compare favorably with that section of the State, which has, under similar advantages, become one of the richest agricultural districts in the Union. I cannot therefore too strongly commend to your favorable consideration the continuance of that policy which has been so auspiciously inaugurated by the opening of the Delaware Railroad. This important enterprise has been conducted with admirable economy, and on a small stock or cash capital. By means of a comparatively slender loan of the public credit, by the energy and good management of its directors, and by the substantial aid of another railroad company with which it is connected, and which is entitled to this special notice for its liberal though sagacious policy in making that a common, which might have become a conflicting interest, this important public work has been put into operation from its Northern to its Southern terminus. Its entire success, now supposed to be established, gives promise that it will repay all parties concerned and none more largely than the public. The President of the Company informs me, that the business of this road, though but lately opened and as yet unsupplied with necessary fixed accommodations, has already exceeded fifty thousand passengers, with freights amounting to over three hundred and fifty thousand bushels of grain, two hundred thousand bushels of lime, and thirty thousand tons of general merchandise and other articles.

To protect, complete and extend this great public improvement, would

seem now to be not only the clear policy, but a demonstrated interest of the State. To make it a thoroughfare, in which all parts of the State may have a common interest would seem now to be justified by its practical results in the advancement of public wealth. The completion of such a system would also place ours in the first rank of improved States, and ultimately make it the medium of communication between the North and the South. I need not enlarge upon the national importance of an improvement which would naturally tend to allay sectional discord and jealousy by approximating the extremes of our confederacy, and strengthening their bonds of commercial intercourse and mutual interest. For the completion of our part, the next and almost only remaining step, is to extend this road to the Ocean, at or near Lewes, to be followed hereafter by a union with any peninsular thoroughfare which may be presented by our sister States at our southern border. I have, therefore, to recommend to your favorable notice, the propriety and necessity of aiding the extension by such measures as your wisdom and liberality may devise. In this connection, I would also suggest that the attention of Congress be invited to the vast national importance of this work in a military as well as a commercial point of view; and to the expediency of the erection, by the General Government, of a suitable pier from the shore, at the terminus of this road, within the Breakwater harbor. By the construction of a pier at this point, as an essential portion of the Breakwater improvement, and its connection with Philadelphia and Baltimore by telegraph, for the instant transmission of commercial intelligence and by railway, for the rapid transit of passengers and merchandise, in time of peace, as also of troops and military stores, in time of war, the commerce of those cities would be greatly promoted, foreign and coastwise trade accelerated and protected, and the national defences materially strengthened.

In the location of such a road, it may not be advisable to anticipate the task of the engineer, or to prejudge and predetermine its precise route from its junction with the Delaware Railroad, yet I cannot forbear to suggest that, for the success and advantage of such a road, when made, as well as for the benefit and accommodation of the public, it is very desirable that the error, which, in the opinion of many, was committed in the location of some portions of the Delaware Railroad, should, if possible, be avoided. I allude to the propriety of consulting the convenience and accommodation of the towns situated in those sections through which the road is to be constructed. Bridgeville and Seaford, on the western border of Sussex, are immediately upon the line of the road already made, while all the other towns in that section of the county, are within from three to six miles of it. Their future growth and prosperity will be the certain results of the advantages which it thus secures to them. In the location of another road through the more central and eastern portions of Kent and Sussex, it would surely be the true policy of the State, as well as the interests of the Company, that it should be so projected as to accommodate the trade and travel to and from Mil-

rd, Georgetown, Milton and Lewes, which, though among the largest wns in the two lower counties, are the least accommodated by the road w in operation. The trade and travel of places of such importance uld not fail to contribute very materially to the business of a road so ade with reference to them. This line of policy has generally been rsued in the location of railroads through the interior of other States, d the increased business and success which have uniformly followed s adoption, should commend it to our sanction.

In obedience to the provisions of the Act of the General Assembly, entled "An Act concerning the Delaware Railroad Company," passed at over, February 28, 1855, I have signed the bonds of this State amounng in the aggregate, to the sum of one hundred and seventy thousand ollars, and have caused the same to be countersigned by the Secretary f State, and sealed with the Great Seal, and have approved as required y said Act of the mortgage and bonds executed and delivered to the tate Treasurer by the Delaware Railroad Company, for the benefit of hich the credit of the State was directed to be advanced.

The growing scarcity of money in this State, notwithstanding the contantly increasing supply of the precious metals coming into the country rom California and other sources, is a matter of surprise to all who are ot familiar with the rules by which trade is regulated and with the fact, hat in many of the Western and Southern States, constant opportunities re offered, of turning this great medium of exchange to profitable account n speculations which frequently realize double the amount invested. The existence of such facilities has the natural tendency to tempt capitalists in the Atlantic States to make even hazardous loans, in the hope of securing the extreme premiums of twelve, fifteen and sometimes twenty-five per cent. Some of the new States, for the purpose of vigorously prosecuting their works of internal improvement, have also thrown into the market their bonds bearing interest at seven and eight per cent., and in some instances at even higher rates than these; many of the older States, too, allow of interest at seven, eight, and even ten per cent. Is it strange, therefore, that investments should be sought after in such States, and in such securities, rather than in those where six per cent. only can be legally taken for money loaned? Without obtruding upon you any opinion of my own, I leave to the discretion of this Legislature, to devise some plan by which this growing evil may be remedied.

The want of uniformity in the valuation of property, under our present mode of assessment, is a matter of general censure among the tax-paying portion of our community. A complaint so universal would seem to merit your grave consideration and the adoption of measures to prevent, in future, the odious irregularities which now exist.

Too much cannot be said in relation to our Common School system of education. Although this subject is one which has been much discussed, yet it is a theme in which we are all deeply interested, and which we should never tire to hear repeated. A general diffusion of knowledge being the surest guaranty of an observance of the laws and the perpetua-

tion of our liberal institutions, it becomes our duty as it is also o interest, to provide for every child in the community the opport nity of improving his mind, and of acquiring such information as wi fit him for the future discharge of the responsible duties which are to d volve upon him as the citizen of a free and sovereign State. In tran mitting to the rising generation the rich inheritance bequeathed to us b our fathers, we should be scrupulously careful that a charge so sacre should be committed to men properly qualified to preserve the trus untarnished for their posterity. Liberty and ignorance cannot long exis *together*. Ours is the most liberal of all forms of government; and, as its con tinuance depends upon the intelligence and virtue of the people, it become our imperative duty to provide such appliances, as well for the *moral* as the intellectual culture of our youth, as shall qualify every future voter in the State to discriminate between truth and error, and to act honestly and wisely in the discharge of all his social and public duties. I may be permitted to remark, whilst treating of this subject, that the Bible should be used as a text-book by every class of readers in our common as well as in our Sabbath schools. There is no danger that the youthful mind will imbibe any error from this pure fountain of truth and knowledge; whilst the constant perusal of its sacred pages will create impressions life-long in their influence for the promotion of virtue and the restraint of vice. Delaware embraces but a small extent of territory, and must necessarily depend upon the intellectual and moral character of her citizens for the maintenance of her proper influence in the sisterhood of States. Much has already been achieved toward perfecting our system of Free School education. Last year, some fifty-three thousand dollars were expended for the support of our public schools alone, of whose benefits over twelve thousand children were the recipients; in addition to which, private and select schools received a liberal patronage. All this has been attended with the most happy results; and it is particularly gratifying to me, to observe that there are few communities in our land, where, in proportion to the white population, there are more persons, who are blessed with the rudiments of an English education. Let us, then, cherish our Common School system as one of the highest privileges of freemen, and study so to improve it as to supply all its defects and render it still more efficient in training the minds of our youth, well assured that no trouble, expense or labor is at all to be compared with the many and lasting benefits which are to be derived from its advancement.

The province of our Common Schools, however, is restricted to elementary education. I would, therefore, suggest the importance of providing, to a limited extent, for instruction of a higher grade for such children as may, in the free schools, show the strongest evidences of talent and merit. This would prove a great incentive to all who are taught in the district schools, and would be but a just reward to the diligence and superior ability of those who excel. If one scholar of the first mark were annually graded from each school district into Dela-

ware College, and his tuition charges, there, defrayed by the State, a substantial service might be rendered to that excellent institution, and a door opened for the most meritorious and promising children of the poor to a classical and collegiate education. From such a band of picked scholars, Delaware would be able to present, in the future, as she has heretofore drawn from humble sources, men who shall reflect honor upon the State, which fostered them, and assume a leading part in the national councils.

As another improvement upon the present system, I would earnestly recommend that provision be made for the appointment of a Superintendent for the State, or one for each county, with a proper compensation, whose duty it shall be to visit annually all the schools in his jurisdiction, and make report at such time and in such manner as your wisdom may direct. There is already a provision for the appointment of a Superintendent for each county, but being an honorary office, entirely, it is not to be presumed that individuals competent to the station can gratuitously devote their time and attention to the discharge of duties, which must interfere with their other engagements.

I consider it only necessary to present a general view of the finances of the State. Each member of the Legislature and indeed every other citizen has the same means of information as myself, by reference to the annual reports of the Auditor of Accounts. The entire annual revenue of the State, from all sources, for the fiscal year ending January 17, 1856, was a little less than fifty-four thousand dollars; of this amount, some sixteen thousand dollars were appropriated to the maintenance of our free schools, leaving the residue in the Treasury to meet the current expenses of the government.

I have the honor to inform you, that, in compliance with the requirements of their respective charters, granted at the last session of the General Assembly, the Bank of Newark, and the Mechanics' Bank have each, before going into operation, transmitted to me a statement of the amount of their capital stock paid in and deposited in their vaults, respectively. The New Castle and Frenchtown Turnpike and Railroad Company have signified their assent to the construction of the New Castle and Octorara Railroad, as provided for in the terms of the Charter of the last named road. The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company, the Wilmington and Philadelphia Turnpike Company, the Wilmington and Brandywine Bank, the Trustees of the Wilmington and Mount Salem M. E. Church, and the Wesleyan Female College, also, have respectively signified to me their acceptance of the Acts passed at the last session, entitled "A further additional supplement to an Act entitled 'An Act to incorporate a Company for the purpose of cutting and making a canal between the Chesapeake Bay and Bay or River Delaaware, or the waters thereof,'" "An additional supplement to an Act entitled, 'An Act to incorporate a Company for making an artificial road from the borough of Wilmington, on the east side of Brandywine Bridge, to the Pennsylvania line in the route leading to the city of Phila-

delphia,'" "A further supplement to the Act entitled, 'An Act to incorporate the Bank of Wilmington and Bandywine in the Borough of Wilmington,'" "An Act to revive an Act to establish the Mount Salem Cemetery," and "A supplement to the Act entitled, 'An Act to incorporate the Wesleyan Female Collegiate Institute.'" These acceptanees have all been made, within the time and in the mode prescribed in said Acts.

An Act proposing an amendment to the Constitution having been passed by the requisite majority at the last session of the General Assembly, providing that, "No lottery nor sale of tickets in any lottery, nor act, in any way aiding or promoting a lottery, shall be authorized or permitted in this State, after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two; and it shall be the duty of the General Assembly to enact necessary laws to suppress all lotteries nd to prevent the sale of lottery tickets or any acts aiding or promoting any lottery within this State after the above-named date." I gave my approval to the same on the fourth day of July last, and caused said amendment and act to be duly published in the Delaware Republican and Delaware Gazette, two newspapers published in the city of Wilmington, in this State, for the consideration of the people in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and of the provisions of the said Act. It now only awaits your concurrence to become a part of the Constitution of the State. A similar policcy now prevails in almost every other State of the Union.

No documents, requiring your consideration, have been received from the Executive or Legislative departments of other States, since the last session.

This State's quota of public arms, for the years 1854–5, with their appendages, have been received and deposited in the public arsenals.

I have also received the usual number of Congressional documents, and of the Laws of the different States, together with a variety of other books and papers, which have been placed in the public library, a schedule of which is herewith transmitted.

I should not feel that I had fully discharged my duty, if, on this occasion, I should fail to make to you a formal announcement of the death of one who, for many years, so ably and so faithfully represented the interests not only of his native State, but of our entire Union, in the councils of the nation. He who but a few months ago reflected back upon our State, with increased lustre, the honor she conferred, in so often selecting him as one of her representatives in the Senate of the United States—JOHN MIDDLETON CLAYTON—is no more! He died on the ninth day of November last, in this Capital, in the midst of the Senatorial term for which he had been chosen some four years ago. The loss of such a man, at any time, would have been sorely and keenly felt by all good men of whatever party; but his death at a period when his commanding intellect, ripened by the experience of a long public

career, had caused his name to be held in reverence by his fellow-citizens in every quarter of the Union, and at a crisis when our public affairs would seem most to need the wisdom and prudence of his patriotic counsels, falls with a pressing weight of sorrow upon the heart of the whole nation. It does not become me, on this occasion, to review the history or pronounce any eulogium upon the character, of him, whose death we all so deeply deplore. His history will be written with that of his country, while his character will remain impressed upon the policy of this State and Nation as long as they shall continue to exist. It may be, that his patriotic services have not been fully appreciated at the present day, but the admiration and gratitude of future generations here, and in every other quarter of the globe, will vindicate his wisdom, and connect his name and fame with one of the most stupendous enterprises ever yet conceived for the promotion of the commerce of the whole world. It gives me a melancholy pleasure to have said thus much of one whom, while among us, we all were pleased to call our friend; but I can add, with a feeling of joy, untinged with any shade of sorrow, that this great and good man has left with us a gratifying assurance that his Christian triumph over the last enemy, was the crowning finish of his long and illustrious career.

Believing it important that the representation of this State, in the United States Senate, should be kept full, I have exercised the power conferred upon me by the Federal Constitution, in the temporary appointment of JOSEPH P. COMEGYS, Esquire, to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. CLAYTON. It will become your duty, to fill the vacancy permanently.

I cannot close this communication without briefly contrasting the contentment, happiness and good order enjoyed under our own institutions, with the oppression, inquietude and discontent which characterize most other governments of the world, and so frequently disturb their peace and harmony. Ours is, in fact, a nation of freemen, where the will of the people, constitutionally expressed, is the supreme law of the land; and, although the capacity of man for self-government has been a theme of much discussion and grave doubt among many political writers and statesmen of former times, our existence and continually-increasing strength and prosperity, for a period of more than eighty years, have triumphantly vindicated the wise theory of our forefathers, and forever put to rest whatever skepticism may have heretofore existed upon this subject. We have wrought out this political problem to a successful solution, and have inspired the people of every civilized country on the globe with admiration at our progress, and a desire to imitate our example.

The history of the world presents no parallel to the wonderful expansion and prosperity of the American Union. An infant, in age, it stands the acknowledged peer of the proudest and most exalted of the European nations. In other countries, political changes and revolutions are seldom effected without a resort to the bloody arbitrament of the sword,

and even the very existence of government itself, is maintained by the bayonets and brute force of large standing armies, those devouring monsters, which while they wring their sustenance from the toiling millions, stand ever ready to become the executioners of popular liberty. With us, on the contrary, no matter how severe may be the contest between opposing parties, the peaceful umpirage of the ballot-box is at once acknowledged and cheerfully acquiesed in, as the rightful settlement of every political controversy; whilst the intolerable burthen of a large military or naval establishment is unknown and unfelt among us. We have, but lately, passed through one of the most exciting political campaigns, that have ever marked the annals of our history; and though the cry of disunion was raised by political demagogues and fanatics from one end of the country to the other, yet it met no responsive throb in the bosoms of the great masses of the people either East, West, North or South. In the people alone, thank Heaven, the power of this government abides. They have always been and I trust will ever continue to be loyal to themselves and just toward each other. They are profoundly penetrated with the conviction that upon the golden chain, which binds these States together, hang all the hopes of the present happiness and future glory of America. It is your duty and mine, fellow-citizens, in our respective spheres, as it is the duty of every true patriot and statesman to nourish and strengthen this popular conviction, by promoting the spread of popular intelligence and virtue, and by embracing every opportunity to effect a more perfect social intercourse and community of feeling, among all parts of our great confederacy. It is upon this conviction, and upon the overruling providence of that Great and Good Being, who has thus far vouchsafed to us his protection, that we must rest our faith in the perpetuity of the Union and its blessed institutions.

P. F. CAUSEY.

Dover, January 6, 1857.